

## **National Fire Academy Online Mediated Course Hot Topics Research in Fire and Life Safety**

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The National Fire Academy is currently recruiting students to help pilot test the **online mediated course**, *Hot Topics Research in Fire and Life Safety* (M0566). The course will be delivered through the NFA Online Mediated system.

An online mediated course balances self-study components with interactions and discussions between the students and the instructor. This course is asynchronous. Students and the instructor will be online at different times and will post and respond to discussions on their own schedule. After reviewing the self-study materials, the students will have the opportunity to participate in discussions with other students on various assigned topics. The instructor will open each module, provide feedback on assignments, summarize discussions, and provide mentoring to meet the unique needs of individual students.

Prospective students should have a thorough understanding of the course requirements before submitting their application. Please familiarize yourself with the course requirements and review the Course Syllabus at the end of this document.

**Please Note: This is a college-level, writing intensive course. You will be expected to adhere to the American Psychological Association (APA) Style Guidelines for all written assignments.**

### **Important Dates:**

**Application Period:** Applications accepted now until May 12, 2017

**First Day of Class:** June 5, 2017

**End of Class:** July 16, 2017

**Please Note: This is a 6 week course.**

### **Course Description:**

This is a 6-week online mediated course designed to provide you with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to identify and research hot topics in fire and life safety to ultimately identify, promote, and embrace change within the fire and life safety community. This includes local, state, tribal, and national fire and life safety entities.

At the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Scan the environment and conduct valid research into new technologies, trends, laws, and products.
- Read, interpret, and apply relevant research in such areas as human behavior, fire dynamics, and other emerging issues.
- Identify emerging local, state, Tribal, and national fire and life safety challenges and develop strategic solutions.
- Demonstrate how research plays a part in community risk reduction.

**Student Selection Criteria:**

The primary audience for this course is any person responsible for programs within the fire and life safety community. The primary audience typically includes fire and life safety professionals and those working within the community, or allied professionals working in related fields. When starting the course, you should identify your specific role and indicate your responsibilities within the organization.

**Prerequisites:**

Designing an Applied Research Proposal (Q0171)

Data Gathering Instruments to Support Applied Research Projects (Q0170)

Note: These courses may be accessed at:

<https://www.usfa.fema.gov/training/nfa/courses/online.html>

You will need to create an account in NFA Online Self Study to complete these two prerequisite courses. Registration and course access is free.

**Costs and Fees:** This course is offered free-of-charge.

**How to Apply:**

Students must complete the General Admission Application ( FEMA Form 119-25-1) available on the USFA website at: <https://www.usfa.fema.gov/training/nfa/admissions/apply.html>

Completed applications should be submitted by May 12, 2017 to:

NETC Admissions Office

16825 S. Seton Avenue

Emmitsburg, MD 21727

Completed applications can also be faxed to the NETC Admissions Office at 301-447-1441.

## **M0566 – Hot Topics Research in Fire and Life Safety**

### **Online Mediated Course Syllabus**

#### **M0566 – Hot Topics Research in Fire and Life Safety Version: First Edition, First Printing, May 2017 Quarter:**

**ACE Credit: Pending**

**IACET Continuing Education Units:**

**Length of Course: 6 Weeks**

#### **Prerequisites:**

Designing an Applied Research Project Proposal (Q0171)  
Data Gathering Instruments to Support Applied Research Projects (Q0170)

**Curriculum: Fire Prevention: Technical**

**Training Specialist: Woody Stratton**  
**Woodrow.stratton@fema.dhs.gov**

## Course Description

M0566 – Hot Topics Research in Fire and Life Safety is a 6-week mediated online course designed to provide you with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to identify and research hot topics in fire and life safety to ultimately identify, promote, and embrace change within the fire and life safety community. This includes local, state, tribal, and national fire and life safety entities.

## Course Expectations

First and foremost – have fun and participate. The more you participate, the more you learn.

This course is designed to challenge you. This course will likely take more time than you might expect when you signed up for it, especially if you have not taken an online college-level course recently. Expect to log in a minimum of 2-3 times per week and spend 10 hours per week reading, researching, and writing your assignments.

This cannot be stressed enough: To pass this course you must have a minimum grade of 70 percent or higher and participate in each course discussion thread, etc. If you do not participate at all – or stop participating – **your National Fire Academy transcript will reflect a “failing” grade**. Please refer to the policy section for more details.

## Primary Audience

The primary audience for this course is any person responsible for programs involved within the fire and life safety community. The primary audience typically includes fire and life safety professionals and those working within the community, or allied professionals working in related fields.

## Course Scope (Goal)

The goal of the course is to guide you through conducting solid research within the fire and life safety services field; evaluate and synthesize the data; and identify, promote, and embrace change within the fire and life safety community.

## Course Objectives

At the end of the course, you should be able to:

- Scan the environment and conduct valid research into new technologies, trends, laws, and products.
- Read, interpret, and apply relevant research in such areas as human behavior, fire dynamics, and other emerging issues.
- Identify emerging local, state, Tribal, and national fire and life safety challenges and develop strategic solutions.
- Demonstrate how research plays a part in community risk reduction.

## Course Content

### Introduction

#### **Icebreaking Discussion Board Activity**

When starting the course, you should identify your specific role and indicate your responsibilities within the organization.

In 125-200 words, introduce yourself by providing:

- Your current role and experience in that role
- Your experience with fire and life safety in general
- Your organization
- What issue or issues do you believe will affect your community's fire and life safety services over the next 3-5 years?

For this discussion, you will need to respond to at least two other students. Discuss how their role or experience is similar to your own.

### Week 1: Identifying an Issue

#### **Objectives**

##### **Terminal Objective**

Scan the environment to identify an issue that affects your community or organization

##### **Enabling Objectives**

You will be able to:

- Identify community risk reduction issues needing research
- Identify your target audience
- Identify potential research sources

#### **Readings / Resources**

Basic vs. applied research (2016)

Firefighter code of ethics. Retrieved from

[https://www.usfa.fema.gov/downloads/pdf/code\\_of\\_ethics.pdf](https://www.usfa.fema.gov/downloads/pdf/code_of_ethics.pdf)

Research flowchart (2016)

United States Fire Administration. (2015). Research steps – Getting started: The research process. Retrieved from <http://usfa.libguides.com/research>

# **Activities**

## **Discussions**

Generally, the initial post will be 175-300 words, and the follow-up responses 125-200 words. There are no “correct” answers to many of these discussion questions. The purpose behind the discussion questions is to have you explore and evaluate your topic areas as well as interact with and gain insight from other students in the class. As a result, you will need to respond to at least two (2) other students.

### **Discussion 1.1: Topic Area Discussion**

The purpose behind the discussion questions is to have you explore and evaluate your topic areas as well as interact with and gain insight from other students in the class. As a result, you will need to respond to at least two (2) other students.

Answer the following questions regarding your selected topic area:

1. What is your topic area?
2. Why did you select this topic area?
3. Who is your target audience?
4. How do the needs and requirements of your target audience fit into the framing of the topic?

In responding to other students, relate your experience and offer any suggestions on the topic area (resources that you’ve found useful).

*The initial response for Discussion 1.1 is due on Thursday. As a course requirement, responses to a minimum of two other students’ discussion board posts are due on Saturday.*

## **Assignments**

### **Assignment 1.1: Topic Area Selection**

(Length between 500 - 750 words)

Identify the topic and why that topic is important in the field of fire and life safety. How have you refined this based on the previous discussion (Discussion 1.1)? Also, explain the following:

- What gave you this idea?
- How does it apply to your community?
- What resources do you intend to use?
- What challenges do you expect to encounter in undertaking this project and how do you plan to overcome those challenges?
- Who is the target audience for your topic?
- What are your plans for obtaining data?

## **Week 2: Identifying Resources and Collecting Initial Data**

### **Objectives**

#### **Terminal Objective**

Conduct valid research into new technologies, trends, laws, and products.

#### **Enabling Objectives**

You will be able to:

- Identify important contextual issues that impact and influence community risk reduction issues
- Frame the topic to be researched
- Locate evidence-based resources
- Differentiate between concepts and issues
- Differentiate among scholarly sources, trade journal sources, and popular periodical sources

### **Readings / Resources**

Concept vs. issue (2016)

Contextual issues (2016)

National Emergency Training Center Library. Designing your research strategy.

Search engines, online informational databases, and search tactics (2016)

Searching vs. Research (2016)

United States Fire Administration. (2015). Scholarly articles: Overview. Retrieved from <http://usfa.libguides.com/scholarly>

United States Fire Administration. (2015). Expanding, narrowing, excluding, and refining your results. Retrieved from <http://usfa.libguides.com/research/tips>

What is the question? (2013)

### **Activities**

#### **Discussions**

##### **Discussion 2.1: What is the Question?**

The purpose behind this discussion is to have you explore and evaluate issues related to analysis as well as interact with and gain insight from other students in the class. As a result, you will need to respond to at least two (2) other students.

Review contextual issues and read “What is the question?” What potential pitfalls might you

encounter if you do not perform the analysis?

In responding to other students, provide any experiences you may have encountered regarding the stated pitfalls. Are there any additional contextual issues that should be considered?

*The initial response for Discussion 2.1 is due on Thursday. As a course requirement, responses to a minimum of two (2) other students' discussion board posts are due on Saturday.*



## Discussion 2.2: Sources

The purpose behind this discussion is to have you explore the research process as well as interact with and gain insight from other students in the class. As a result, you will need to respond to at least two (2) other students.

State your topic and your audience. When conducting research on your topic, what sources did you find the most helpful and why? Provide an example.

In responding to other students, suggest additional resource those people might find helpful. Why do you think these resources would help?

*The initial responses for Discussion 2.2 are due on Thursday. As a course requirement, responses to a minimum of two (2) other students' discussion board posts are due on Saturday.*

## Assignments

### Assignment 2.1: Concept vs. Issue Self-test

Once you have reviewed the Concept vs. Issue information, complete the self-test by completing the quiz.

Statement	Concept or Issue
Fire modeling is "junk science" and doesn't reflect the reality of fire behavior in a compartment.	
There are too many variables in fire dynamics to accurately predict the effect of fire sprinkler systems in storage occupancies.	
Smoke alarms in one- and two-family dwellings are adequate in providing early notification and prompt evacuation.	
Providing education to alter human attitudes and behaviors about fire.	
Juvenile firesetting is an innate, not learned, behavior.	
Fire safety education is not delivered equitably to all citizens.	
There is no such thing as an accidental fire.	
Enforcement of building and fire safety codes by pursuing violations to assure compliance.	
Politicians are more concerned about community economic growth than public safety.	
Code enforcement personnel are not adequately trained to properly interpret and apply building and fire codes.	
Electronic performance interventions to solve just-in-time training needs within departments.	
Not all digital training platforms are interoperable.	

## Assignment 2.2: Source List

(Length between 500 - 750 words)

Find a minimum of five sources. Your list of sources must include at least one scholarly source, one trade journal source, and one popular periodical source. Identify the type of source for each source in your list. For each source, discuss the reliability of the source and how you intend to use it (e.g., supporting evidence, differing point of view, etc.)

## Week 3: Research Design Plan

### Objectives

#### Terminal Objective

Develop a research design plan.

#### Enabling Objectives

You will be able to:

- Discuss how motivation affects the analysis and collection of data
- Identify research design plan components

### Readings / Resources

Ambrust, C., Grant, P., & May, D. (2012). An examination of fire safety perceptions and behaviors among students at a regional Midwestern university. *International Fire Service Journal of Leadership and Management*, 6, 33-41. Retrieved from [http://www.ifsjlm.org/sites/default/files/past-edition-pdfs/IFSJLM\\_Vol6.pdf](http://www.ifsjlm.org/sites/default/files/past-edition-pdfs/IFSJLM_Vol6.pdf).

Marsar, S. (2013). The officer's role in safe apparatus driving. *Firefighter Nation*. Retrieved from <http://www.firefighternation.com/article/emergency-vehicle-operations/officers-role-safe-apparatus-driving>.

Research Plan. (2016).

### Required Video

Boston Globe. (2015). Firefighters recall colleagues who died from occupational cancer. [Video file]. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hOvBypsaHog>.

### Activities

#### Discussion

##### Discussion 3.1: Motivation

The purpose behind this discussion is to have you consider how motivation can affect sources used for research and the final product as well as interact with and gain insight from other students in the class. As a result you will need to respond to at least two (2) other students.

Watch the Boston Globe video.

1. What is the motivation for producing the video? (What was the problem presented in the first place? Why is the problem important?)
2. Several different groups (union, family members, etc.) are represented throughout the video. Choose at least one group. What is that group's motivation to appear in the video?
3. Consider the topic area you have selected for your research paper. What is your motivation for discussing this topic?
4. If you were to produce a video for your topic area, what groups do you think would

- participate? Why?
5. What groups would not participate and why?

In responding to other students, discuss whether there are other groups that might participate in his/her video. Why would they be motivated to appear?

*The initial response for Discussion 3.1 is due on Thursday. As a course requirement, responses to a minimum of two other students' discussion board posts are due on Saturday*

## **Assignments**

### **Assignment 3.1: Identifying Research Design Plan Components**

(Length between 500 - 750 words)

1. Read the following two articles:
  - *An examination of fire safety perceptions and behaviors among students at a regional Midwestern university*
  - *The officer's role in safe apparatus driving*
2. For each article, identify the Assumptions, Inferences, Concepts, and Point of View.
3. Compare your findings for the two articles. How are the two articles different regarding the Assumptions, Inferences, Concepts, and Points of View?

### **Assignment 3.2: Research Design Plan**

(Length between 500 - 750 words)

Complete the Research Design Plan for your topic. Include the purpose, question, information gathered, assumptions, and inferences/interpretations/conclusions, concepts, and point of view.

## **Week 4: Collecting Additional/Supporting Data, Analyzing Data, Interpreting Findings, and Stating Conclusions**

### **Objectives**

#### **Terminal Objectives**

- Develop conclusions that support solutions

#### **Enabling Objectives**

You will be able to:

- Focus research through modified keywords and/or key phrases
- Apply Evaluating Thinking criteria to determine the validity of sources
- Apply Quality in Information criteria to determine the validity of sources
- Develop strategic solutions.

### **Readings / Resources**

Common research tools – Other sources; Common methodologies (2016)

Evaluate thinking (2016)

Evaluating quality in information (2016)

Validity assessment (2016)

### **Activities**

#### **Discussion**

##### **Discussion 4.1: Keywords**

The purpose behind this discussion is to identify keywords that are relevant to your topic of interest and consider how to effectively arrange words to garner the best research results as well as interact with and gain insight from other students in the class. As a result, you will need to respond to at least two (2) other students.

1. Identify any unique keywords or phrases specific to your topic that you have not searched before.
2. What were the results?
3. How has this affected your research?

(For example, a search for the term “campus fire alarms” may be further narrowed by searching for “reducing nuisance alarms on campus,” and further narrowed by searching for “reducing

nuisance alarms from microwave ovens on campus.” The effect might be dramatic.)

In responding to other students, are there any additional keywords you would recommend searching based on your experience? Why would those words be effective keywords?

*The initial response for Activity 4.1 is due on Thursday. As a course requirement, responses to a minimum of two other students' discussion board posts are due on Saturday*

## **Assignments**

### **Assignment 4.1: Evaluating Thinking and Quality in Information**

(Length between 500 - 750 words)

Choose your most significant source (the one you intend to use the most in your paper) and evaluate the content based on the six Evaluating Thinking criteria: Clarity, Accuracy, Relevance, Depth, Logical, and Breadth. Using examples, explain how this source meets the criteria.

Next, evaluate that same source for Quality in Information: Accuracy, Scope of Coverage, Objectivity, Timeliness, Authority, and Verifiability. Explain how your source meets at least four (4) of these criteria.

### **Assignment 4.2: Develop Your Conclusion**

In 500-750 words, state your conclusions and explain how you arrived at your conclusion by incorporating the answers to the questions listed below:

- What is the issue?
- Does data support that the issue exists?
- Whom does this issue impact?
- How are they impacted?
- Based on this information, what is the conclusion?
- What action(s) should be taken to address this issue?
- How do the solutions (actions) address the issue?

## Week 5: Writing

### Objectives

#### Terminal Objective

Develop a draft research paper using the report format provided

#### Enabling Objectives

You will be able to:

- Identify abstract components.
- Develop citations using APA format.

### Readings / Resources

Abstract. (2016).

Billings, D. (2014). EMS under fire: Developing an active shooter incident response plan for the Manchester fire – rescue – EMS department. Retrieved from <http://nfa.usfa.fema.gov/pdf/efop/efo48437.pdf>

Johnson, L. (2013). Building a community injury profile: The first step toward a risk reduction program for the city of Dallas. Retrieved from <http://nfa.usfa.fema.gov/pdf/efop/efo47302.pdf>

Somers, S. (2012). Spatial cluster analysis of out-of-hospital cardiac arrest in Mesa, Arizona. Retrieved from <http://nfa.usfa.fema.gov/pdf/efop/efo46779.pdf>

Report format. (2016)

National Emergency Training Center Library. USFA Library Quick Start to American Psychological Association Style Citations

Purdue University. (2016). Purdue Online Writing Lab. Retrieved from <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>

### Activities

#### Assignments

##### ***Assignment 5.1: Abstract Components***

(Length between 200-450 words)

Read the three sample abstracts:

- EMS under fire: Developing an active shooter incident response plan for the Manchester fire – rescue – EMS department.
- Building a community injury profile: The first step toward a risk reduction program for the city of Dallas.
- Spatial cluster analysis of out-of-hospital cardiac arrest in Mesa, Arizona.

For each abstract, identify:

- Purpose
- Method/Approach
- Findings/Results
- Implications/Conclusions
- Motivation

## **Assignment 5.2: First Draft of Research Paper**

(Length between 1750 -1900 words with a minimum of six cited references)

Develop first draft of your Research Paper. Your paper should include the following elements:

- Title page (separate page).
- Abstract
- Introduction
- Background and Significance
- Methods/Approach
- Results/Findings
- Implications/Conclusions
- Recommendations/Solutions
- Reference List

## Week 6: Final Paper

### Objectives

#### **Terminal Objective**

Apply the steps of the Research flowchart to present research that plays a part in community risk reduction.

#### **Enabling Objective**

Discuss how the research process can be applied to other topic areas.

### Activities

#### **Discussion**

##### **Discussion 6.1: Transfer of Knowledge**

The purpose behind this discussion is to share what you have learned and to gain insight from other students' experiences and discuss how you might apply that knowledge in your own department. As a result, you will need to respond to at least two (2) other students.

What have you learned about the research process in general and specifically as it relates to your topic? How might you apply this in the future?

In responding to other students, discuss how you think their findings might be applied in your department/region.

*The initial response for Discussion 6.1 is due on Thursday. As a course requirement, responses to a minimum of two other students' discussion board posts are due on Saturday.*

#### **Assignment**

##### **Assignment 6.1: Final Research Paper**

(Length between 1750 -1900 words with a minimum of six cited references)

Finalize your Research Paper based on feedback from your instructor. Your paper should include the following elements:

- Title page
- Abstract
- Introduction
- Background and Significance
- Methods/Approach
- Results/Findings
- Implications/Conclusions
- Recommendations/Solutions
- Reference List



## **Writing Expectations**

Student writing will conform to the generally accepted academic standards for college papers. Papers will reflect the original work of the student and give appropriate credit through citations for ideas belonging to other authors, publications or organizations. Students' written work should be free of grammatical and syntax errors, free of profanity or obscene language or ideas, and reflect critical thinking related to the course subject matter.

## **Citation and Reference Style**

Attention Please: Students will follow the APA, Sixth Edition as the sole citation and reference style used in written work submitted as part of coursework to NFA. Assignments completed in a narrative essay, composition format, abstract, and discussion posts must follow the citation style cited in the APA, Sixth Edition.

## **Late Assignments**

Students are expected to submit classroom assignments by the posted due date (11:59 p.m. EDT/EST) and to complete the course according to the published class schedule. As adults, students, and working professionals, you must manage competing demands on your time. Discussion board postings submitted within 3 days after the submission deadline will receive up to a 20% deduction. Those that do not submit their discussion board postings within this timeline will receive a "0" grade for the week. Final assignment papers will not be accepted after the deadline. Any paper submitted after the deadline will receive a "0" grade for that assignment.

## **Netiquette**

Online learning promotes the advancement of knowledge through positive and constructive debate – both inside and outside the classroom. Forums on the Internet, however, can occasionally degenerate into needless insults and "flaming." Such activity and the loss of good manners are not acceptable in a professional learning setting – basic academic rules of good behavior and proper "Netiquette" must persist. Remember that you are in a place for the rewards and excitement of learning which does not include descent to personal attacks or student attempts to stifle the forum of others.

- Technology Limitations. While you should feel free to explore the full-range of creative composition in your formal papers, keep e-mail layouts simple. The NFA Online classroom may not fully support MIME or HTML encoded messages, which means that bold face, italics, underlining, and a variety of color-coding or other visual effects will not translate in your e-mail messages.
- Humor Note. Despite the best of intentions, jokes and especially satire can easily get lost or taken seriously. If you feel the need for humor, you may wish to add "emoticons" to help alert your readers: ;-), : ), © .

## **Disclaimer Statement**

Course content may vary from the outline to meet the needs of this particular group.

## **Grading**

Please review the rubrics that explain how grades will be awarded.

Students who do not complete the entire course will be awarded an Incomplete (I) grade. In accordance with National Fire Academy academic policies, an Incomplete (I) grade must be removed by the end of the next semester following the course, or it automatically becomes a Failing (F) grade.

Students who do not obtain an end-of-course passing score face possible sanctions for up to 12 months regarding acceptance or placement in future National Fire Academy course offerings.

## **Academic Honesty**

Students are expected to exhibit exemplary ethical behavior and conduct as part of the NFA community and society as a whole. Acts of academic dishonesty including cheating, plagiarism, deliberate falsification, and other unethical behaviors will not be tolerated.

Students are expected to report academic misconduct when they witness a violation. All cases of academic misconduct shall be reported by the instructor to the Training Specialist.

If a student is found to have engaged in misconduct and the allegations are upheld, the penalties may include, but are not limited to one or a combination of the following:

- a. expulsion,
- b. withholding of stipend or forfeiture of stipend paid,
- c. exclusion from future classes for a specified period; depending on the severity it could range from 1-10 years, and/or
- d. forfeiture of certificate for course(s) enrolled in at NETC.

Refer to NFA-specific Standard Operating Procedure 700.1 – *Academic Code of Conduct and Ethics* for more information.

## Course Delivery Method

This distance learning (mediated) course will enable you to complete academic work in a flexible manner, completely online. Course materials and access to an online discussion forum will be made available to you. With the exception of the course assignment paper, all online assignments are due Thursday and Saturday evenings. Weekly discussion board threads close for comment on Saturday (11:59 p.m. EDT/EST) of the week as noted. Instructors will support you throughout this 6-week course.

## Course Schedule

The purpose of the course schedule is to give you, at a glance, the required preparation, activities, and evaluation components of your course. The expectations for a 3 credit hour course are for you to spend 10 hours in weekly work. This estimate includes preparation, activities, and evaluation regardless of the delivery method.

WEEK	MATERIALS REVIEW	ACTIVITIES
Pre-Course	Description of online mediated courses and student expectations  Instructions for accessing the online course  Instructions for selecting a project topic area  List of possible topic areas	Online courses: Designing an Applied Research Project Proposal (Q0171)  Data Gathering Instruments to Support Applied Research Projects (Q0170)
1	Firefighter Code of Ethics  Syllabus  Research Flowchart  Basic vs. Applied Research  Basic Research and Applied Research: Definitions and Differences  Getting Started: The Research Process	Discussion: Student Introduction  Discussion 1.1: Topic Area  Assignment 1.1: Topic Area Selection

WEEK	MATERIALS REVIEW	ACTIVITIES
2	Contextual Issues Concept vs. Issue What is the Question? Scholarly Articles: Overview Search Engines, Online Informational Databases, and Search Tactics Expanding, Narrowing, Excluding, and Refining Your Results Designing Your Research Strategy Searching Vs. Research	Discussion 2.1: What is the Question? Discussion 2.2: Sources Assignment 2.1: Concept vs. Issue Self-test (not graded) Assignment 2.2: Source List
3	An Examination of Fire Safety Perceptions and Behaviors Among Students at a Regional Midwestern University The Officer's Role in Safe Apparatus Driving Research Plan Firefighters Recall Colleagues Who Died from Occupational Cancer	Discussion 3.1: Motivation Assignment 3.1: Identifying Research Design Plan Components Assignment 3.2: Research Design Plan
4	Common Research Tools – Other Sources; Common Methodologies Evaluate Thinking Evaluating Quality in Information Validity Assessment	Discussion 4.1: Keywords Assignment 4.1: Evaluating Thinking and Quality in Information Assignment 4.2: Develop your Conclusion

WEEK	MATERIALS REVIEW	ACTIVITIES
5	<p>Abstract</p> <p>EMS under fire: Developing an Active Shooter Incident Response Plan for the Manchester Fire – Rescue – EMS Department</p> <p>Building a Community Injury Profile: The First Step toward a Risk Reduction Program for the City of Dallas</p> <p>Spatial Cluster Analysis of Out-of-Hospital Cardiac Arrest in Mesa, Arizona</p> <p>USFA Library Quick Start to American Psychological Association Style Citations</p> <p>A Guide for Writing APA Style Research Papers</p> <p>Purdue Online Writing Lab</p> <p>Report Format</p>	<p>Assignment 5.1: Abstract Components</p> <p>Assignment 5.2: First Draft of Research Paper</p>
6	N/A	<p>Discussion 6.1: Transfer of Knowledge</p> <p>Assignment 6.1: Final Research Paper</p>

# Grading Methodology (Evaluation Procedures)

## GRADING SCALE

Each student grade will be based on the following items:

Assignment	Total Points	% of Grade
Assignment 1.1: Topic Area Selection	20	5%
Assignment 2.2: Source List	20	5%
Assignment 3.1: Identifying Research Design Plan Components	20	5%
Assignment 3.2: Research Design Plan	20	5%
Assignment 4.1: Evaluating Thinking and Quality in Information	20	5%
Assignment 4.2: Develop your Conclusion	20	5%
Assignment 5.1: Abstract Components	20	5%
Assignment 5.2: First Draft of Research Paper	40	10%
Assignment 6.1: Final Research Paper	100	25%
Participation (6 discussions worth 20 points apiece)	120	30%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100%</b>

Points	Percentage	Grade
	90% – 100%	A
	80% – 89%	B
MINIMUM PASSING GRADE	70% – 79%	C
Below	Below 70%	F

## Required Reading Assignments

Student completion of reading assignments will be done via evaluation of your written forum assignments and will not be a separately graded activity.

## **Suggested Readings**

Suggested readings are not evaluated, but may enhance your understanding and promote discussion course material.

## **Weekly Discussion Board Assignments**

This section provides instructions on how to initiate and respond to discussions. A "New Thread" is started each time you submit an original discussion topic. Generally, the initial post will be 175 - 300 words, and the follow-up responses 125 - 200 words.

- Demonstrate an analysis of the questions and material while showing an application of your own thinking about the discussion question. Also, commenting on another student's post and any follow-up questions to further demonstrate your discussion board question insight, synthesis, analysis, and position or argument. Questions must be answered concisely and accurately.
- Responding to the Main Topic: A good title tells something of the nature of your personal response. "Response to Discussion 1," for example, is not a very useful title, particularly if everyone in your course uses it. Try to use topic words which will identify your topic: "Response to discussion about culture change at the company level."
- Responding to Someone Else's Response: Make sure that you respond on the document intended so that your contribution will line up in the threaded discussion in the right place.
- Quality Discussion Responses: Responses such as "I agree," "good question," or "good answer" are not acceptable. Any response that is just an opinion or unsubstantiated; any response that is carelessly typed, poorly thought-out, grammatically incorrect or confusing; or any response that is disrespectful of another student or any other person, etc., is not acceptable. A high quality response applies a concept from the course in a meaningful way or facilitates analysis of the course material or topic.
- Responses should indicate that you have critically thought about the discussion topic and demonstrate that you can apply and articulate the concepts you are learning. Your responses should be well-organized and grammatically correct. Substantive responses don't just deliver opinions; they offer justification for those opinions and should cite sources when appropriate.
- Expected Quantity of Responses: Full participation in each discussion requires that you not only respond to the initial discussion item, but that you return at a later date to read the responses of others and respond to at least one other person's comments per discussion item. Treat it as a conversation. Think about how you would feel if you made an observation in a traditional classroom setting and no one responded.

- Discussion Open and Close Dates: There may be more than one discussion item in a course. Be sure to note the start and end dates of the discussions and responses in the course's forum.
- Grading: Student completion of weekly discussion board questions and responses account for 120 points of the total course grade. The discussion forum's grading rubrics can be found in the course syllabus.

## **Weekly Written Assignments**

There are several written assignments in this course that serve to assist you in gaining a better understanding of the course materials. Your written assignments are intended to measure your analysis of important concepts and sharpen your intellectual skills of synthesis, evaluation, and application. The intent of the written assignments is to provide an opportunity for you to demonstrate the knowledge you are gaining on the topics in this course.

For your written assignments, you will be required to use the "*Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*," (APA) sixth edition. The APA style website provides a guideline, examples from books to online articles, FAQs, even a detailed tutorial for beginning users. Please bookmark this site so you can refer to it for assistance throughout the course (<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/> or <http://www.apastyle.org>).

## **Research Paper**

Your completion of the research paper accounts for 140 points of the total grade (40 points for the initial draft; 100 points for the final paper). The research paper will be a minimum of 1,750 words in length and will not exceed 1,900 words (excluding the title page and bibliography). The research paper is evaluated on content (analysis and application of course material, original critical thinking, and research that includes at least six sources), writing quality (grammar, syntax, structure, and compliance with APA Sixth Edition formatting), and timeliness. You will not use headings (e.g., level 1, level 2, etc.) in your paper. The final research paper is due on Saturday (11:59 p.m. EDT/EST) during the 6<sup>th</sup> week of the course. The file name for your assignment paper needs to reflect your name and the assignment (e.g., John Doe Assignment 1.doc).

## **Grading**

Please see the grading rubrics for details on how the paper will be evaluated.



# Grading Rubrics

## Discussion Forums Grading Rubric

How Discussion Forums will be Graded = 0 to 20 maximum points

Elements of Performance	<i>Does not meet expectations</i> (0 points)	<i>Does not meet some expectations</i> (1 - 4 points)	<i>Meets expectations</i> (5 - 7 points)	<i>Exceeds expectations</i> (8 - 10 points)
<p><b>175 – 300 word discussion forum submittal.</b></p> <p><b>Insight Synthesis, Analysis and Argument: Demonstrates an analyzing of the questions and material and shows an application of your own thinking.</b></p> <p><b>Questions are answered concisely and accurately.</b></p>	No discussion forum submitted.	<p>Less than a 175 word submittal.</p> <p>Primarily summary of information, though some synthesis, analysis and insight.</p> <p>Provides generalities or simple restatement of information to support claim(s).</p> <p>Commentary is minimally relevant or repetitive.</p> <p>Some detailed conclusions are reached from the questions posed.</p> <p>Most questions, but not all, are answered accurately and concisely.</p>	<p>175 – 300 word submittal.</p> <p>Very good synthesis, analysis and insight.</p> <p>Provides relevant and specific evidence to support claim(s).</p> <p>Commentary is thorough and effective.</p> <p>Several detailed conclusions are reached from the questions posed.</p> <p>Questions are answered, but not accurately or concisely.</p>	<p>175 – 300 word submittal.</p> <p>Exceptional synthesis, analysis and insight.</p> <p>Provides more than relevant and specific evidence to support claim(s).</p> <p>Commentary is thorough, concise and effective.</p> <p>Many detailed and insightful conclusions are reached from the questions posed.</p> <p>All questions are answered accurately and concisely.</p>

## Discussion Forums Grading Rubric (continued)

### Organization, Grammar and Mechanics

Elements of Performance	<i><b>Does not meet expectations</b></i> <b>(0 points)</b>	<i><b>Marginally Acceptable</b></i> <b>(1 point)</b>	<i><b>Acceptable</b></i> <b>(2 points)</b>	<i><b>Strong</b></i> <b>(3 points)</b>	<i><b>Exceptional</b></i> <b>(4 points)</b>
<b>Organization, Grammar and Mechanics: Diction, sentence structure and spelling. Complies with APA Sixth Edition.</b>	No discussion forum submitted.	May have errors in grammar, usage, or the conventions of written English; these errors may lead to some confusion.  The document is mostly organized, but instructions were not entirely followed.  There are 7 to 8 errors.	May have a few errors in grammar, usage, and the conventions of written English; these errors do not cause confusion.  The document is mostly organized, but instructions were not entirely followed.  There are 4 to 6 errors.	Generally free from errors in grammar usage and the conventions of written English.  The document is mostly organized and most instructions were followed.  There are 1 to 3 errors.	Free from errors in grammar, usage, and the conventions of written English.  There are 0 errors.

### First and Second Responses

Elements of Performance	<i><b>Does not meet expectations</b></i> <b>(0 points)</b>	<i><b>Does not meet some expectations</b></i> <b>(1 point)</b>	<i><b>Meets expectations</b></i> <b>(2 points)</b>	<i><b>Exceeds expectations</b></i> <b>(3 points)</b>
<b>125 – 200 word response to one other student's discussion forum submittal.</b>	No answer to other student's discussion forum submittal.	Less than 125 word response to other student; response is very superficial and provides limited to no feedback.	125 – 200 word response to other student; response is useful but provides limited feedback.	125 – 200 word response to other student; response is well thought out, useful and provides excellent feedback.

### Written Assignments (excluding assignment 5.1) Grading Rubric

You will be rated on two elements of performance:

- Synthesis, Analysis and Argument (worth up to 16 points)
- Organization, Grammar and Mechanics (worth up to 4 points)

## Synthesis, Analysis and Argument

<b>Elements of Performance</b>	<b><i>Does not meet expectations</i></b> <b>(0 points)</b>	<b><i>Marginally Acceptable</i></b> <b>(1-4 points)</b>	<b><i>Acceptable</i></b> <b>(5-8 points)</b>	<b><i>Strong</i></b> <b>(9-12 points)</b>	<b><i>Exceptional</i></b> <b>(13-16 points)</b>
<b>500 – 750 word submittal.</b>	No written assignment submitted.	Less than 500 word submittal.	500 – 750 word submittal.	500 – 750 word s ubmittal.	500 – 750 word submittal.
<b>Synthesis, Analysis and Argument: Demonstrates an analyzing of the material and the application of the student's own thinking.</b>		Primarily summary of information, though some synthesis, analysis and insight. Provides generalities or simple restatement of information to support claim(s).	Develops some synthesis, analysis and insight but some mere summary of information. Provides reasonable and predictable evidence to support claim(s).	Very good synthesis, analysis and insight. Provides relevant and specific evidence to support claim(s).	Exceptional synthesis, analysis and insight. Provides relevant, substantial and concrete evidence to support major claim(s).
<b>All questions answered in a concise, clear and comprehensive manner.</b>		Questions answered with minimal relevancy or repetitiveness.	Questions answered with some degree of specificity and insightfulness.	Questions answered in a thorough and effective manner.	Questions answered in a perceptive, thorough, and effective manner.

**Written Assignments Grading Rubric (excluding assignment 5.1) (continued)**  
**Organization, Grammar and Mechanics**

<b>Elements of Performance</b>	<b><i>Does not meet expectations</i> (0 points)</b>	<b><i>Marginally Acceptable</i> (1 point)</b>	<b><i>Acceptable</i> (2 points)</b>	<b><i>Strong</i> (3 points)</b>	<b><i>Exceptional</i> (4 points)</b>
<b>Organization, Grammar, and Mechanics: Diction, sentence structure, and spelling. Complies with APA Sixth Edition.</b>	No written assignment submitted.	<p>May have errors in grammar, usage, or the conventions of written English; these errors may lead to some confusion.</p> <p>The document is mostly organized, but instructions were not entirely followed.</p> <p>There are 7 to 8 errors.</p>	<p>May have a few errors in grammar, usage, and the conventions of written English; these errors do not cause confusion.</p> <p>The document is mostly organized, but instructions were not entirely followed.</p> <p>There are 4 to 6 errors.</p>	<p>Generally free from errors in grammar usage and the conventions of written English.</p> <p>The document is mostly organized and most instructions were followed.</p> <p>There are 1 to 3 errors.</p>	<p>Free from errors in grammar, usage, and the conventions of written English.</p> <p>There are 0 errors.</p>

## Written Assignment 5.1 Grading Rubric

You will be rated on two elements of performance:

- Synthesis, Analysis and Argument (worth up to 16 points)
- Organization, Grammar and Mechanics (worth up to 4 points)

# Synthesis, Analysis and Argument

<b>Elements of Performance</b>	<b><i>Does not meet expectations</i> (0 points)</b>	<b><i>Marginally Acceptable</i> (1-4 points)</b>	<b><i>Acceptable</i> (5-8 points)</b>	<b><i>Strong</i> (9-12 points)</b>	<b><i>Exceptional</i> (13-16 points)</b>
<b>200 – 450 word submittal.</b>	No written assignment submitted.	Less than 200 word submittal.	200 – 450 word submittal.	200 – 450 word s submittal.	200 – 450 word submittal.
<b>Synthesis, Analysis and Argument: Demonstrates an analyzing of the material and the application of the student's own thinking.</b>		Primarily summary of information, though some synthesis, analysis and insight. Provides generalities or simple restatement of information to support claim(s).	Develops some synthesis, analysis and insight but some mere summary of information. Provides reasonable and predictable evidence to support claim(s).	Very good synthesis, analysis and insight. Provides relevant and specific evidence to support claim(s).	Exceptional synthesis, analysis and insight. Provides relevant, substantial and concrete evidence to support major claim(s).
<b>All questions answered in a concise, clear and comprehensive manner.</b>		Questions answered with minimal relevancy or repetitiveness.	Questions answered with some degree of specificity and insightfulness.	Questions answered in a thorough and effective manner.	Questions answered in a perceptive, thorough, and effective manner.

**Written Assignment 5.1 Grading Rubric (continued)**  
**Organization, Grammar and Mechanics**

<b>Elements of Performance</b>	<b><i>Does not meet expectations</i> (0 points)</b>	<b><i>Marginally Acceptable</i> (1 point)</b>	<b><i>Acceptable</i> (2 points)</b>	<b><i>Strong</i> (3 points)</b>	<b><i>Exceptional</i> (4 points)</b>
<b>Organization, Grammar, and Mechanics: Diction, sentence structure, and spelling. Complies with APA Sixth Edition.</b>	No written assignment submitted.	<p>May have errors in grammar, usage, or the conventions of written English; these errors may lead to some confusion.</p> <p>The document is mostly organized, but instructions were not entirely followed.</p> <p>There are 7 to 8 errors.</p>	<p>May have a few errors in grammar, usage, and the conventions of written English; these errors do not cause confusion.</p> <p>The document is mostly organized, but instructions were not entirely followed.</p> <p>There are 4 to 6 errors.</p>	<p>Generally free from errors in grammar usage and the conventions of written English.</p> <p>The document is mostly organized and most instructions were followed.</p> <p>There are 1 to 3 errors.</p>	<p>Free from errors in grammar, usage, and the conventions of written English.</p> <p>There are 0 errors.</p>

**First Draft of Final Research Paper Grading Rubric (worth up to 40 points)**

		Excellent		Acceptable		Not Acceptable	
Technical Content		4	3	2	1	0	Mark
1	Definition of purpose, question, problem, or issue clearly identified						
2	Number of sources provided						
3	Supporting information from recognized sources that is reliable; current; complete; and relevant to the question, problem, or issue						
4	Assumptions clearly identified						
5	Inferences and interpretations clearly identified						
6	Existing concepts and associated ideas clearly identified						
7	Point of view clearly indicated as well as other points of view considered						
8	Implications and consequences of solution clearly identified						
9	Length of draft						
10	Organization, grammar, mechanics, and use of APA						
<b>Total</b>							



## Final Research Paper Grading Rubric

You will be rated on two elements of performance:

- Synthesis, Analysis and Argument (worth up to 80 points)
- Organization, Grammar and Mechanics (worth up to 20 points)

### Synthesis, Analysis and Argument

<b>Elements of Performance</b>	<b><i>Does not meet expectations</i> (0 points)</b>	<b><i>Marginally Acceptable</i> (1-20 points)</b>	<b><i>Acceptable</i> (21-40 points)</b>	<b><i>Strong</i> (41-60 points)</b>	<b><i>Exceptional</i> (61-80 points)</b>
<b>1,750 – 1,900 word submittal.</b>  <b>Synthesis, Analysis and Argument: Demonstrates analysis of the material and the application of the student's own thinking.</b>  <b>All questions answered in a concise, clear and comprehensive manner.</b>	No written assignment submitted.	Less than 1,750 word submittal.  Primarily summary of information, though some synthesis, analysis and insight. Provides generalities or simple restatement of information to support claim(s).  Questions answered with minimal relevancy or repetitiveness.	1,750 – 1,900 word submittal.  Develops some synthesis, analysis and insight but some mere summary of information. Provides reasonable and predictable evidence to support claim(s).  Questions answered with some degree of specificity and insightfulness.	1,750 – 1,900 word s submittal.  Very good synthesis, analysis and insight. Provides relevant and specific evidence to support claim(s).  Questions answered in a thorough and effective manner.	1,750 – 1,900 word submittal.  Exceptional synthesis, analysis and insight. Provides relevant, substantial and concrete evidence to support major claim(s).  Questions answered in a perceptive, thorough, and effective manner.

## Final Research Paper Grading Rubric

(continued) Organization,

Grammar and Mechanics

Elements of Performance	<i><b>Does not meet expectations</b></i> <b>(0 points)</b>	<i><b>Marginally Acceptable</b></i> <b>(1-5 points)</b>	<i><b>Acceptable</b></i> <b>(6-10 points)</b>	<i><b>Strong</b></i> <b>(11-15 points)</b>	<i><b>Exceptional</b></i> <b>(16-20 points)</b>
<b>Organization, Grammar and Mechanics: Diction, sentence structure and spelling. Complies with APA Sixth Edition.</b>	No written assignment submitted.	<p>May have errors in grammar, usage, or the conventions of written English; these errors may lead to some confusion.</p> <p>The document is mostly organized, but instructions were not entirely followed.</p> <p>There are 7 to 8 errors.</p>	<p>May have a few errors in grammar, usage, and the conventions of written English; these errors do not cause confusion.</p> <p>The document is mostly organized, but instructions were not entirely followed.</p> <p>There are 4 to 6 errors.</p>	<p>Generally free from errors in grammar usage and the conventions of written English.</p> <p>The document is mostly organized and most instructions were followed.</p> <p>There are 1 to 3 errors.</p>	<p>Free from errors in grammar, usage, and the conventions of written English.</p> <p>There are 0 errors.</p>